

REMARKS

By this amendment claims 1, 3, and 5-29 are pending.

The Office Action indicated that claims 4, 8, and 9 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Office Action indicated that claims 16-29 are allowed.

Claim 4, as presented in Applicant's response dated March 20, 2007, depended from claim 2, which depended from claim 1. Claim 1 is amended to include all of the elements of claim 2 and claim 4. Claim 1 is in condition for allowance. Claims 3, 5-7, and 10-15 depend from claim 1 and are also in condition for allowance.

Claims 8 and 9 have been amended to independent form to include all of the elements of base claim 1. Claims 8 and 9 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 16, 21, and 27 have been amended to remove the paragraph numbering, "(a)", "(b)", "(c)", etc. Claim 27 has been amended to replace the term "ferrule" with the term "tube gripping element" to correspond with the "tube gripping element" recited in the preamble of claim 27.

All pending claims are in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kenneth J. Smith
Kenneth J. Smith, Reg. No. 45,115
Customer No. 24024
Telephone: 216-622-8674